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State to receive \$600,000 federal grant to aid in re-employment of steelworkers

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. -- The Missouri Division of Workforce Development has received a \$600,000 National Emergency Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to aid in re-employing steelworkers who lost their jobs when GST Steel Co. closed in Kansas City.

GST Steel employed more than 700 employees. The Missouri Division of Workforce Development applied for the grant after holding several Rapid Response meetings to advise the workers regarding potential employment and training opportunities. After reviewing a petition by the division, the U.S. Labor Department also certified workers at GST Steel as eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance.

The grant application was written in a cooperative effort between the Full Employment Council, Project Refocus at the University of Missouri at Kansas City, the United SteelWorkers of America – Local 13, the GST Steel Company, the Missouri AFL-CIO, and the Missouri Division of Workforce Development.

Funds received through this grant will underwrite re-employment and training services to assist the workers recently laid off from GST Steel. Through collaborative efforts, partners will ensure that affected workers are made aware of employment and training services. The employees may take advantage of a wide array of helpful programs including assessment, job search or placement assistance, employment planning, career counseling, training opportunities, case management and other services.

“The skilled workers affected by this layoff are a tremendous asset to the workforce and the local economy,” said Joseph L. Driskill, director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development. “It is essential that we work with them and employers in Kansas City to ensure that these workers are reintegrated into the workforce without significant reduction in their ability to earn a living. Staff members of the Missouri Division of Workforce Development, the Full Employment Council, the United Steelworkers, and other partner agencies at Missouri Career Centers will work together with former GST Steel employees to ensure their successful return to employment.”

In addition to other services, former GST Steel employees will be introduced to the Missouri *WORKS!* Internet site, which features access to information on thousands of jobs in and around the Kansas City area. Use of the services of the Missouri Career Centers and the Missouri *WORKS!* Site, www.missouriworks.com, are provided at no cost.